



Department of Human Resource Management

# Worklife Elevated

## State of Utah Employee Newsletter

Where is this picture? See page 5

## GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

### Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.

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It is my distinct honor to launch the inaugural issue of the State of Utah Employee Newsletter. As dedicated employees, you provide Utah's citizens with a tremendous variety of essential services. The title of the newsletter, "Worklife Elevated", suggests that we are striving to raise the bar even higher as we work together to serve the public. I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all state employees for the quantity and quality of the work you provide. Further, I encourage all of us to continue our efforts to develop ways to keep

Utah's top ranking as one of the best managed states in the country.

Together, we can do it!



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

### Jeff Herring, DHRM

I am excited to be a part of this first State of Utah Employee newsletter. It is one step of many that the Department of Human Resource Management is taking in order to add value to State employees and our State agencies. Too often many of the projects, achievements, and services that are being provided by employees go unnoticed. Other times we focus on our own areas of influence with no understanding of what is taking place in other agencies. This newsletter will highlight the work we are conducting as a State, the achievements we are attaining, and will be a mode to deliver valuable information on timely topics for State employees.

One of the timely topics that we are dealing with in the State is change. Something that is constant is change. Change occurs

everywhere and we are not immune from it within state government. There is change within our existing organizations. There are new organizations being created. Changes in our benefits are occurring as the cost of health care increases. Changes in the systems we use to do business is underway. All of this change can cause a great deal of stress to individuals. Nevertheless, change will continue to take place. One of the most powerful tools we have to help deal with change is communication. As we understand the change we can begin to see how the change affects each of us. When we begin to see where we fit into the change, we can begin to accept the change and use change as a way to bring about innovation

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE, cont.

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and improvement.

It is said that the key to real estate is "location, location, location." In my opinion the key to dealing with change is "communication, communication, communication." This newsletter will be distributed every other month and will strive to have articles of interest and relevance to our work-

force. It will include articles that spotlight agencies and employees. It will hopefully provide employees with insights into how to effectively deal with challenges we all face in our employment. However, above all, I hope it will keep everyone informed of the direction we are heading as a State and how we all can help steer us on the course.



## NEW COUNSELING BENEFIT OFFERED BY PEHP

By Debbie Price

As an enhancement to your existing medical insurance plan, PEHP is adding a new benefit called "Life Assistance Counseling" effective July 1, 2006.

Statistics show that many employees go through some life event, such as minor depression, marital problems, and stress, in which their work and overall health may be affected. In order to help employees and their families through these rough spots, counseling services will be provided through Blomquist Hale and will be offered statewide.

There will be no cap on the number of visits provided and members will be seen until they have developed the tools necessary to resolve issues on their own. This new benefit will not interfere with or negate the regular mental health benefit currently provided on all of PEHP's plans, as it will not replace counseling for ongoing and more serious mental health issues.

This new service is available to all members covered under your medical plan. Members on the Preferred, Advantage and Summit Care plans will pay no co-pay for this service and those on the High Deductible Health

Plan will pay \$70 per session, up to 4 sessions (additional sessions will have no co-pay), if the deductible has not been met.

Some agencies currently offer counseling services similar to this through their Employee Assistance Programs. Please check with your respective agency to see if they are going to continue the Employee Assistance Program's counseling services in the future or if the new PEHP Life Assistance Counseling program has replaced what is currently offered.

For further information, visit PEHP's website at [www.pehp.org](http://www.pehp.org).

## PEHP LIFE INSURANCE REBATES

If you are a State of Utah employee who pays for PEHP Term Life good news is on the way.

Last summer, many of you received a rebate check worth six months or three months premium, depending on your years of participation in the PEHP Term Life program. PEHP has received many phone calls and questions at benefit fairs asking if we would be sending rebates again this year. The answer at that time was "no", however, the situation has changed and the answer is now,

"YES!"

Because of the overall strength of the PEHP Life and Accident program you have seen a lot of changes in recent years. PEHP has been able to bring the Accidental Death and Dismemberment program entirely in-house, rates for both the PEHP Term Life and Accident programs have been decreased by 20%, and last year PEHP was able to spread some of the surplus among those who participate in the program by sending rebates.

Once again a surplus exists and the Utah Retirement System Board has approved another round of rebates.

The amount of your rebate will be based on your years of participation in the PEHP Term Life program. PEHP will use the premium amount you paid as of April 1, 2006 to calculate the rebate and checks will be mailed in July. The final calculations have not been made, so the individual rebate amounts have not yet been determined.

Watch your mailbox in late July !



## DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

### NEW 365-DAY LICENSES

Fishing, small game, combination and furbearer licenses are now valid for one year from the date of purchase. For example, if you purchase a license on May 10, it will be valid through May 9 of the following year.

In the past, these licenses expired at the end of the year, despite the month in which they were purchased. Some anglers, for example, were reluctant to purchase fishing licenses toward the end of the summer, knowing that their license would only be valid for the remainder of the year. The new 365-day licenses guarantee that everyone will receive a full year's

use from their license.

The DWR is confident that the new 365-day licenses will not only benefit sportsmen and sportswomen, but will also benefit the DWR by spreading out license sales throughout the year and, ultimately, increasing license sales.

If you have a major credit card, you

# 365-DAY LICENSES

can [purchase a license or permit at https://secure.utah.gov/hflo/hflo](https://secure.utah.gov/hflo/hflo). You can have the license mailed to you (so you can wrap it and give it as a gift) or you can have it mailed directly to the person you're buying it for. It may take up to five days for the license to arrive in the mail. You may even print out your license from your computer and start using it immediately.

The same items also may be purchased at [DWR administrative offices \(http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/about/address.html\)](http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/about/address.html) and from over 300 [hunting and fishing license agents](#) across the state.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT, DEPT OF HEALTH

Patrick F. Luedtke, MD, MPH is employed by the Utah Department of Health as the Director of the Public Health Laboratory. Dr. Luedtke received his Medical Doctor degree from Medical College of Wisconsin



and his Master's of Public Health degree from the University of Utah. Dr. Luedtke also spent many years in the United States Navy.

Dr. Luedtke is recognized for his efforts in spearheading the collaborative initiative to bring a new laboratory to the State of Utah. The Utah Department of Health in collaboration with the Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality, and Public Safety, are in the planning process for a "Unified State Laboratory" in which 16 labs from those State Departments will come together under

one roof in a new facility. A planning and programming contract has been signed with a Chicago based Architectural firm to produce the initial document addressing how these four state laboratory facilities will come together. This document will be completed in September 2006. The four state agencies will then present to the Building Board in October 2006 in support of the new facility followed by a presentation to the legislature in January 2007. Congratulations to Dr. Luedtke on his contributions to the success of this statewide initiative!

## DHRM RULES CHANGES

By Conroy Whipple

Every year the Department of Human Resource Management makes amendments to the DHRM rules which impact employees in potentially significant ways. These changes run the gamut from minor "tweaks" to major policy adjustments. Here are some of the changes that may be of interest

to state employees.

### LEAVE

Funeral leave has been changed to bereavement leave. An employee may now be granted up to 24 hours of bereavement leave following the death of a member of the employee's immediate family. Management will

now have the flexibility to allow the employee not only to attend the funeral but also deal with other matters related to the death.

### CORRECTIVE ACTION / DISCIPLINE

Corrective action is designed to

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## DHRM RULES CHANGES, cont.

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give management options to correct substandard performance of an employee without resorting to discipline. One of these options is a formal written plan for improvement. Changes this year place mandatory requirements on management when a written plan option is used. These include a specified time period for the plan, performance expectations for improvement, regular feedback to the employee, disciplinary action that will result from failure to improve, and a written performance appraisal at the conclusion of the plan. Regardless of the option chosen, when corrective action is successful, management is now required to document their actions and inform the employee of the consequences of a recurrence of the deficient work performance.

Disciplinary action is designed to address a broad range of problematic

employee performance and behavior that may include noncompliance with rules, policies, and professional standards; poor work performance; insubordination; failure to maintain skills; or incidents involving threats of harm or intimidation. This year, an employee may also be disciplined for failure to comply with standards of conduct. This is intended to deal with flagrant conduct not otherwise covered by rule such as offensive or vulgar language, provocative dress or yelling at supervisors or coworkers.

### POLITICAL ACTIVITY

A subtle but important change was made this year to the rule governing the political activity of employees. Compliance with the provisions of the federal "Hatch Act" is now the sole responsibility of the employee. Failure to comply will result in mandatory dismissal from state employment. Employees contemplating any kind of

participation in a political campaign are advised to contact the Hatch Act unit of the U.S. Office of Special Counsel for an advisory opinion before they become involved.

*Employees can access the complete DHRM rules on the web at <http://www.dhrm.utah.gov/policy.jsp>*

*FY07 rules will be available in July*

## TIPS ON PERFORMANCE PLANS and APPRAISALS

By JJ Acker

A performance appraisal is a subjective measurement of achievement, relative to expectations, during a given period of time. Few employees or managers have neutral sentiments regarding performance appraisals. Regardless of one's position, it must be realized that they have limitations.

Used exclusively, appraisals can reduce productivity, erode performance, damage morale, and foster short-sightedness. Coupled with a comprehensive performance management system, they can add great value. Here are a few pointers that help link plans and appraisals to the performance management process:

- Long before the appraisal, performance expectations must be clearly

defined. This is referred to as a performance plan and according to HR Rules is to be outlined by August 30 each fiscal year.

- Identify the organizational priority of major work products according to the mission and goals of the department and work group.
- Make sure products or services are defined in terms of measurable expectations such as quantity, quality, time frame, or efficiency. If you intend to measure, it must be quantified or qualified.
- Make sure you understand how performance expectations will be measured. Will it be measured by a number, time, or some other way?
- Make sure you understand the rating

scale. What makes the difference between pass or fail, satisfactory or exceptional?

- Identify factors that have prevented or delayed performance in the past and create plans for removing barriers or increasing capacity. These plans should be monitored and reviewed, but are not part of the appraisal.
- An appraisal should not try to do too much. For instance, an appraisal should not be a work contract, a development plan, a project plan, a corrective action plan, etc.
- An appraisal should not be the only occasion an employee receives feedback on their performance.





## UTAH CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER PROGRAM

The Utah Certified Public Manager Program announces Fall Quarter 2006 which begins the week of September 11th. A class schedule and registration forms will be available soon at [www.cpm.utah.gov](http://www.cpm.utah.gov).

The Utah Certified Public Manager Program increases the professional performance of current and future

government managers. Certified Public Manager® is a professional designation granted by nationally accredited programs in state and federal governments. The CPM Program increases the capacity of its participants to lead people, manage work and develop self. The Utah CPM Program is co-sponsored by the Utah Department of Human Resource

Management and the Utah System of Higher Education.

**Notice to State of Utah Employees:**  
*Enrollment is open to individuals receiving authorization from supervisors and may be contingent upon department policies and funding.*

**On the front cover: GUNSIGHT BUTTE at Lake Powell** Created by the Glen Canyon Dam, Lake Powell has over 2,000 miles of red rock shoreline. The lake is the world's most popular house boating destinations.

**We'd love to hear from you.**

**Please submit feedback, suggestions, or ideas for future articles to:**

**[HRNewsletter@utah.gov](mailto:HRNewsletter@utah.gov)**

**DHRM is adding value to the State of Utah by:**

- Increasing Customer Service
- Increasing Efficiency
- Decreasing Liability

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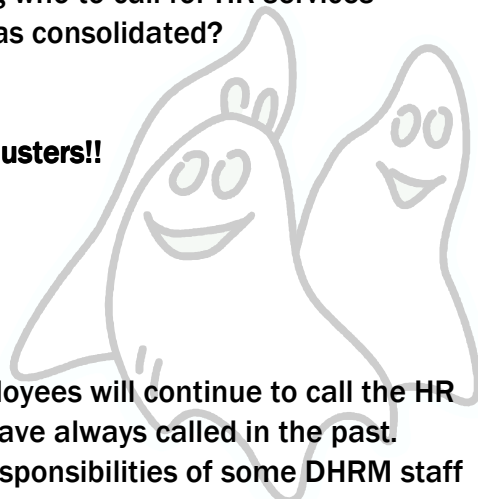
Thanks to everyone who submitted one of over 1500 entries for the newsletter naming contest. Our winning name "Worklife Elevated" was submitted by two employees, **Donald Conger** from the Tax Commission and **Nancy Andrew** from the Department of Workforce Services.

CONGRATULATIONS!

### WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

Are you wondering who to call for HR services now that DHRM has consolidated?

**The answer: HR Busters!!**



No seriously, employees will continue to call the HR office/staff they have always called in the past. While roles and responsibilities of some DHRM staff may change in order to provide increased customer service, increased efficiency, and decreased liability statewide, the offices and staff you know and love will mostly remain the same. DHRM is attempting to make this change as seamless as possible for you!!